APPENDIX A

UTAH ADMIN. CODE R884-24P-62 "VALUATION OF STATE ASSESSED UNITARY PROPERTIES PURSUANT TO UTAH CODE ANN. SECTION 59-2-201."
(proposed changes underlined)

Purpose. The purpose of this rule is to:

1. specify consistent mass appraisal methodologies to be used by the Property Tax Division (Division) in the valuation of tangible property assessable by the Commission; and

2. identify preferred valuation methodologies to be considered by any party making an appraisal of an individual unitary property.

B. Definitions:

1. "Cost regulated utility" means any public utility assessable by the Commission whose allowed revenues are determined by a rate of return applied to a rate base set by a state or federal regulatory commission

2. "Fair market value" means the amount at which property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell and both having reasonable knowledge of the relevant facts. Fair market value reflects the value of property at its highest and best use, subject to regulatory constraints.

3. "Rate base" means the aggregate account balances reported as such by the cost regulated utility to the applicable state or federal regulatory commission.

4. "Unitary property" means operating property that is assessed by the Commission pursuant to Section 59-2-201(1)(a) through (c).

a) Unitary properties include:

(1) all property that operates as a unit across county lines, if the values must be apportioned among more than one county or state; and

(2) all property of public utilities as defined in Section 59-2-102.

b) These properties, some of which may be cost regulated utilities, are defined under one of the following categories.

(1) "Telecommunication properties" include the operating property of local exchange carriers, local access providers, long distance carriers, cellular telephone or personal communication service (PCS) providers and pagers, and other similar properties.(2) "Energy properties" include the operating property of natural gas pipelines, natural gas distribution companies, liquid petroleum products pipelines, and electric corporations, including electric generation, transmission, and distribution companies, and other similar entities.

(3) "Transportation properties" include the operating property of all airlines, air charter services, air contract services, including major and small passenger carriers and major and small air freighters, long haul and short line railroads, and other similar properties.

C. All tangible operating property owned, leased, or used by unitary companies is subject to assessment and taxation according to its fair market value as of January 1, and as provided in Utah Constitution Article XIII, Section 2. Intangible property as defined under Section 59-2-102 is not subject to assessment and taxation.

D. General Valuation Principles. Unitary properties shall be assessed at fair market value based on generally accepted appraisal theory as provided under this rule.

1. The assemblage or enhanced value attributable to the tangible property should be included in the assessed value. See Beaver County v. WilTel, Inc., 995 P.2d 602 (Utah 2000). The

value attributable to intangible property must, when possible, be identified and removed from value when using any valuation method and before that value is used in the reconciliation process.

2. The preferred methods to determine fair market value are the cost approach and a yield capitalization income indicator as set forth in E.

a) Other generally accepted appraisal methods may also be used when it can be demonstrated that such methods are necessary to more accurately estimate fair market value.

b) Direct capitalization and the stock and debt method typically capture the value of intangible property at higher levels than other methods. To the extent intangible property cannot be identified and removed, relatively less weight shall be given to such methods in the reconciliation process, as set forth in E.4.

c) Preferred valuation methods as set forth in this rule are, unless otherwise stated, rebuttable presumptions, established for purposes of consistency in mass appraisal. Any party challenging a by a preponderance of evidence, that the proposed alternative establishes a more accurate estimate of fair market value.

3. Non-operating Property. Property that is not necessary to the operation of unitary properties and is assessed by a local county assessor, and property separately assessed by the Division, such as registered motor vehicles, shall be removed from the correlated unit value or from the state allocated value.

E. Appraisal Methodologies.

1. Cost Approach. Cost is relevant to value under the principle of substitution, which states that no prudent investor would pay more for a property than the cost to construct a substitute property of equal desirability and utility without undue delay. A cost indicator may be developed under one or more of the following methods: replacement cost new less depreciation (RCNLD), reproduction cost less depreciation reproduction cost, and historic cost less depreciation (HCLD).

a) "Depreciation" is the loss in value from any cause. Different professions recognize two distinct definitions or types of depreciation.

(1) Accounting. Depreciation, often called "book" or "accumulated" depreciation, is calculated according to generally accepted accounting principles or regulatory guidelines. It is the amount of capital investment written off on a firm's accounting records in order to allocate the original or historic cost of an asset over its life. Book depreciation is typically applied to historic cost to derive HCLD.

(2) Appraisal. Depreciation, sometimes referred to as "accrued" depreciation, is the difference between the market value of an improvement and its cost new. Depreciation is typically applied to replacement or reproduction cost, but should be applied to historic cost if market conditions so indicate. There are three types of depreciation:

(a) Physical deterioration results from regular use and normal aging, which includes wear and tear, decay, and the impact of the elements.

(b) Functional obsolescence is caused by internal property characteristics or flaws in the structure, design, or materials that diminish the utility of an improvement.

(c) External, or economic, obsolescence is an impairment of an improvement due to negative influences from outside the boundaries of the property, and is generally incurable. These influences usually cannot be controlled by the property owner or user.

b) Replacement cost is the estimated cost to construct, at current prices, a property with utility equivalent to that being appraised, using modern materials, current technology and current standards, design, and layout. The use of replacement cost instead of reproduction cost eliminates the need to estimate some forms of functional obsolescence.

c) Reproduction cost is the estimated cost to construct, at current prices, an exact duplicate or replica of the property being assessed, using the same materials, construction standards, design, layout and quality of workmanship, and embodying any functional obsolescence.

d) Historic cost is the original construction or acquisition cost as recorded on a firm's accounting records. Depending upon the industry, it may be appropriate to trend HCLD to current costs. Only trending indexes commonly recognized by the specific industry may be used to adjust HCLD.

e) RCNLD may be impractical to implement; therefore the preferred cost indicator of value in a mass appraisal environment for unitary property is HCLD. A party may challenge the use of HCLD by proposing a different cost indicator that establishes a more accurate cost estimate of value.

2. Income Capitalization Approach. Under the principle of anticipation, benefits from income in the future may be capitalized into an estimate of present value.

a) Yield Capitalization. The yield capitalization formula is CF/(k-g), where "CF" is a single year's normalized cash flow, "k" is the nominal, risk adjusted discount or yield rate, and "g" is the expected growth rate of the cash flow.

(1) Cash flow is restricted to the operating property in existence on the lien date, together with any replacements intended to maintain, but not expand or modify, existing capacity or function. Cash flow is calculated as net operating income (NOI) plus non-cash charges (e.g., depreciation and deferred income taxes), less capital expenditures and additions to working capital necessary to achieve the expected growth "g". Information necessary for the Division to calculate the cash flow shall be summarized and submitted to the Division by March 1 on a form provided by the Division.

(a) NOI is defined as net income plus interest.

(b) Capital expenditures should include only those necessary to replace or maintain existing plant and should not include any expenditure intended primarily for expansion or productivity and capacity enhancements.

(c) Cash flow is to be projected for the year immediately following the lien date, and may be estimated by reviewing historic cash flows, forecasting future cash flows, or a combination of both.

i) If cash flows for a subsidiary company are not available or are not allocated on the parent company's cash flow statements, a method of allocating total cash flows must be developed based on sales, fixed assets, or other reasonable criteria. The subsidiary's total is divided by the parent's total to derive the allocation percentage to estimate the subsidiary's cash flow.

ii) If the subject company does not provide the Commission with its most recent cash flow statements by March 1 of the assessment year, the Division may estimate cash flow using the best information available.

(2) The discount rate (k) shall be based upon a weighted average cost of capital (WACC) considering current market debt rates and equity WACC should reflect a typical capital structure for comparable companies within the industry.

(a) The cost of debt should reflect the current market rate (yield to maturity) of debt with the same credit rating as the subject company.

(b) The cost of equity is estimated using standard methods such as the capital asset pricing model (CAPM), the Risk Premium and Dividend Growth models, or other recognized models.

i) The CAPM is the preferred method to estimate the cost of equity. More than one method may be used to correlate a cost of equity, but only if the CAPM method is weighted at least 50% in the correlation.

ii) The CAPM formula is k(e) = R(f) + (Beta x Risk Premium), where k(e) is the cost of equity and R(f) is the risk free rate.

a. The risk free rate shall be the current market rate on 20-year Treasury bonds.

b. The beta should reflect an average or value-weighted average of comparable companies and should be drawn consistently from Value Line or an equivalent source. The beta of the specific assessed property should also be considered.

c. The risk premium shall be the arithmetic average of the spread between the return on stocks and the income return on long term bonds for the entire historical period contained in the Ibbotson Yearbook published immediately following the lien date.

(3) The growth rate "g" is the expected future growth of the cash flow attributable to assets in place on the lien date, and any future replacement assets.

(a) If insufficient information is available to the Division, either from public sources or from the taxpayer, to determine a rate, "g" will be the expected inflationary rate in the Gross Domestic Product Price Deflator obtained in Value Line. The growth rate and the methodology used to produce it shall be disclosed in a capitalization rate study published by the Commission by February 15 of the assessment year.

b) A discounted cash flow (DCF) method is impractical to implement in a mass appraisal environment, but may be used to value individual properties.

c) Direct Capitalization is an income technique that converts an estimate of a single year's income expectancy into an indication of value in one direct step, either by dividing the normalized income estimate by a capitalization rate or by multiplying the normalized income estimate by an income factor.

3. Market or Sales Comparison Approach. The market value of property is directly related to the prices of comparable, competitive properties. The market approach is estimated by comparing the subject property to similar properties that have recently sold.

a) Sales of comparable property must, to the extent possible, be adjusted for elements of comparison, including market conditions, financing, location, physical characteristics, and economic characteristics. When considering the sales of stock, business enterprises, or other properties that include intangible assets, adjustments must be made for those intangibles.

b) Because sales of unitary properties are infrequent, a stock and debt indicator may be viewed as a surrogate for the market approach. The stock and debt method is based on the accounting principle which holds that the market value of assets equal the market value of liabilities plus shareholder's equity.

4. Reconciliation. When reconciling value indicators into a final estimate of value, the appraiser shall take into consideration the availability, quantity, and quality of data, as well as the strength and weaknesses of each value indicator. Weighting percentages used to correlate the value approaches will generally vary by industry, and may vary by company if evidence exists to support a different weighting. The Division must disclose in writing the weighting percentages used in the reconciliation for the final assessment. Any departure from the prior year’s weighting must be explained in writing.

F. Property Specific Considerations. Because of unique characteristics of properties and industries, modifications or alternatives to the general value indicators may be required for specific industries.

1. Cost Regulated Utilities.

a) HCLD is the preferred cost indicator of value for cost regulated utilities because it represents an approximation of the basis upon which the investor can earn a return. HCLD is calculated by taking the historic cost less depreciation as reflected in the utility's net plant accounts, and then:

(1) subtracting intangible property;

(2) subtracting any items not included in the utility's rate base (e.g., deferred income taxes and, if appropriate, acquisition adjustments); and

(3) adding any taxable items not included in the utility's net plant account or rate base.

b) Deferred Income Taxes, also referred to as DFIT, is an accounting entry that reflects the difference between the use of accelerated depreciation for income tax purposes and the use of straight-line depreciation for financial statements. For traditional rate base regulated companies, regulators generally exclude deferred income taxes from rate base, recognizing it as ratepayer contributed capital. Where rate base is reduced by deferred income taxes for rate base regulated companies, they shall be removed from HCLD.

c) Items excluded from rate base under F.1.a)(2) or b) should not be subtracted from HCLD to the extent it can be shown that regulators would likely permit the rate base of a potential purchaser to include a premium over existing rate base.

2. Railroads.

a) The cost indicator should generally be given little or no weight because there is no observable relationship between cost and fair market value.

3. Wind Power Generating Plants.

a) The cost indicator should generally be given no weight because there is no observable relationship between cost and fair market value.

b) The income indicator should be the primary indicator of value for wind power generating projects. A projected revenue and expense model based on discounting expected operating revenues before interest, taxes, deprecation and amortization (EBITDA) over the anticipated useful economic life of the project should be used. A discounted projected revenue and expense methodology is preferable to the yield or direct capitalization methods described in Subpart E. The appropriate discount rate should reflect the cost of capital and debt on the project. All intangibles should be removed from the discounted projected revenues and expenses in determining the value of the project and its operations, including without limitation, all federal, state and local monetary and project incentives; renewable energy credits; production tax credits; environmental (green) subsidies, payments and incentives; accelerated depreciation and amortization deductions and credits; and tax expensing deductions and credits.